

THE BOURBON NEWS.

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ADJUSTING AFFAIRS.

BY GILBERT DOYLE.

I HAD dined, with St. Croix, and we were now on our way to some uninteresting people who were giving a dance. Since entering the cab the conversation had slackened; apparently we both possessed ample food for reflection. As we rattled over some stones St. Croix shouted in my ear:

"You'll see her to-night, Ingram!" I had returned from the country that morning; still deep in my thoughts, I replied:

"No such luck; she is 100 miles from town, and—"

I stopped abruptly as I caught a glimpse of his face. Fortunately he had not noticed my observation. "So," I continued, grasping the situation, "you have once again decided that the feminine interest in your life should be centered in one?"

"Ingram, old chap," he said, solemnly, "it's serious this time!" (I have heard this remark made before under similar circumstances.)

"I sincerely trust it is!" I replied. A good-looking, wealthy man, past 30, has no right to be unmarried.

"This has happened whilst I have been away," I added.

He nodded.

"And the maiden is—?" I began.

St. Croix actually looked confused.

"Well, she's hardly—," he said, awkwardly, "that is—of course, she's a widow—well, the fact is, she's a widow!"

I glanced at him reproachfully.

"Any—er—"

"No, no," he replied, hurriedly, "of course there are no children. Why, man, she's only young herself—husband died in India—fever, snake bite, or some other handy thing of that kind. O, no," he went on, with a smile, "I couldn't do it if there were any children!"

"Have you actually proposed to her?"

"Not yet," he replied thoughtfully, "but I feel that it is as good as settled. Ingram," he continued, with an air of enthusiasm, "she's adorable. She—"

"My dear St. Croix," I said, "these confidences remind me of the good old days."

"Ah," he replied, with a sigh, "this is no boyish flirtation!"

"By Jove!" he cried, as an idea struck him, "you two will get on capitally together. Having both been in India, you will be able to—"

"Chat about her husband?" I suggested.

St. Croix looked serious.

"Poor child," he said in a compassionate tone, "She must have been very unhappy during that time!"

It is strange how men generally refer to their wives' first marriages in this way.

"We are admirably suited," he continued, his face lighting up. "I am 30, and she—well, I should say she is 25. A man should be a year or so older than his wife."

"Yes," I agreed, "she is very young for a widow."

"Much too young," replied St. Croix; "that's one reason why she should marry again!"

"True," I said. "How long has it been going on?"

He considered for a few minutes.

"I first saw her," he said, slowly, "at ten minutes to nine on Monday last week!"

"My dear fellow!" I exclaimed, "you must hurry up matters; the lady will positively weary of the courtship!"

Just then the cab drew up with a jerk.

"Here we are," said St. Croix. "Jump out!"

After greeting our hostess we separated. Several people of my acquaintance were there, and I had to go through the usual number of duty dances. Presently I saw St. Croix coming towards me.

"Ingram," he said, taking me by the arm, "come with me."

There is nobody so exacting as a man in love.

"She is waiting to be introduced to you," he said, as we made our way to the conservatory. Here, in a secluded corner (for St. Croix is experienced in these matters), we found the lady.

"Mrs. Fordyce," said St. Croix, "allow me to—"

"Mrs. Fordyce!"

I looked at her, then burst out laughing.

"Dr. Ingram!" she exclaimed.

"You know one another?" cried St. Croix, with a puzzled look.

"Why," I said, "I have known Mrs. Fordyce since—"

"Yes, Dr. Ingram and I are quite old friends," she interrupted, with a glance at me.

I understood.

"That is jolly!" St. Croix said, heartily.

I am not sure that Mrs. Fordyce agreed with him entirely.

The strains of a waltz came through the open doors. St. Croix looked at his programme.

"Bother!" he cried. "It's my dance with the daughter of the house. Will you kindly look after Mrs. Fordyce, Ingram?"

"I should be delighted," I replied, and he hurried off.

As soon as he had disappeared I turned to Mrs. Fordyce.

"It's all very odd," I remarked.

"What?" she queried—"that you should turn out to be the friend Mr.

St. Croix has been talking to me about?"

I smiled; the quaintness of the whole matter seemed infinitely amusing to me.

"No," I said, "that you should be the lady whose charms he has been describing to me."

She blushed; I gazed at her critically.

"Pon my word," I exclaimed at length, "it is positively marvelous, to think that it is close upon—"

"That is just what I don't want you to think, doctor," she interrupted.

"But, my dear Mrs. Fordyce, you actually look younger and more beautiful than you did when we were together at Simla!"

She laughed.

"We have always been in the habit of speaking plainly to one another."

"Yes," I agreed; "it saves time."

She gave me a nervous little glance.

"O," I said, reassuringly, "I am your friend."

She was playing with the edge of her fan.

"A woman is only as old as she looks," she observed, "and I was married at an extremely early age."

"St. Croix was perfectly justified in his estimate—25 he told me," I said, with a laugh. "But that is a detail; the thing that will surprise him most will be the fact that Clare exists!"

She looked at me with a smile.

"Ah, you have met her at the Roscoes?"

"Yes; I found my little ten-year-old sweetheart of Simla had grown into a dainty young lady of 18! How is it?"

I continued, "that St. Croix is ignorant of her existence?"

"Well, he assumed I had no children, and I—I could not summon up courage to tell him afterwards. You see what a difficult position I am in," she added, plaintively.

"Yes, it is difficult," I agreed. "The unexpected appearance of a full-grown daughter upon the scene might prove too heavy a strain at this critical stage of his love. A girl of 18 is a responsibility," I added.

All this time I had been hugging to myself some special intelligence. I thought it was about time to bring matters to a head.

"Mrs. Fordyce," I said, "do you really care for St. Croix?" She did not reply for a moment.

"Yes," she said simply; "I really love him. O, can't you suggest some—"

I glanced at her reproachfully.

"Any—er—"

"No, no," he replied, hurriedly, "of course there are no children. Why, man, she's only young herself—husband died in India—fever, snake bite, or some other handy thing of that kind. O, no," he went on, with a smile, "I couldn't do it if there were any children!"

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FLIRTED TO THE LAST.

The Girl Was Sweet and Was Waiting for Her Finnee.

There are people and people in this world. All sorts and conditions of men and women.

In a railway waiting room the other evening sat a handsome girl, apparently about 20 years old. She had gone early for the west-bound train and was the first occupant of the waiting room. Shortly afterward a young man sauntered in—an entire stranger to the girl—and, to his surprise, she blushed and pleasantly said: "Good evening."

This was all the young man needed in the way of introduction, and as he sat down beside her he thought he had struck something "dead easy," for the girl looked so much like an innocent, unsophisticated country maiden. The charming, child-like manner in which she spoke brought a flood of memories that recalled the odor of violets, new-mown hay and peppermint. A faint twinge of pain in his foot even seemed delicious, for was it not that old stone bruise?

"How long will it be till train time?" asked the girl.

"It will be a half hour," he replied.

"So long?" she said. "I wish it was here. I am waiting for a friend."

This with a pout and heightened color that rendered her doubly charming and caused the young man to exert all his faculties to entertain her during the half hour that intervened until train time.

When the train at last came noisily into the station and halted a very ordinary looking young man stepped off and the girl rushed up and, shaking hands, looked up at him as if she expected something more than a mere handshake. But the young man's face reddened perceptibly and he even seemed reluctant to shake hands with the radiant little maiden. The girl's fellow, for he was evidently such, finally seemed to thaw out and she walked proudly off in full possession.

They were lovers, he learned afterward, having met by prearrangement, and were married that night. But the girl, filled to overflowing, could not, woman-like, refrain from a final eleventh-hour flirtation.—Pittsburgh Post.

HUNK MADE A MISTAKE.

Thought He Stole the Shout, But It Appeared That He Didn't.

It was the judge doing the talking. "One of my most peculiar experiences was while I was on the bench down in Pennsylvania. Hunk Wodders was brought down from the mountains charged with stealing a shoat from one of his neighbors. I had hunted and fished with the old fellow as a guide and felt sorry to see him in trouble. I asked him if he wanted a jury trial."

"Don't want no trial 'tall," he replied, doggedly. "I'll just plead guilty. I hain't got no witnesses or no friends. They'll just swear I stole that hog an' where'll I be?"

"But did you steal it, Hunk?"

"Didn't steal nuthin'. But kin take my medicine."

"I'll enter a plea of not guilty and appoint a lawyer to defend you. You shall have a chance to prove your innocence."

"I hain't a goin' ter foolin' round with no lawyer. I bought that shoat from a feller, an' that's all there are to it."

"Then I called him to me and whispered: 'Now, honest, Hunk, between man and man, did you steal the pig?'"

"Jist atween you and me, judge?"

"No one else shall know a word about it."

"Course I did. That there measly Bill Sims owed me three dollars fur two years an' I jist lifted his shoat ter get even."

"The case went to trial. The testimony against Hunk was strong and I charged the jury as fairly as I ever did in my life, but they acquitted him."

"Then Hunk came up to me with flushed face and hanging head. 'Pon my soul, judge, I didn't mean fur tell you no lie. I thought I stole that shoat, but it 'pears I didn't.'"—Detroit Free Press.

Dangers of the Diet Fad.

There is not much danger, ordinarily, of our children being starved. But an idea has lately been borrowed from England which we should be sorry to have extend itself in this country—that of keeping children on a spare diet to prevent their becoming plump. It is natural and right that young creatures should be plump, and the best medical authorities agree that just before the great change from childhood to youth begins, at the age of 12, a store of fat ought to be laid up as a safeguard against the unusual demands about to be made upon their strength. It is certainly a mistake to deprive young children of wholesome, nutritious food to prevent the accumulation of flesh.—Woman's Home Companion.

Bismarck Pudding.

Finely chop one-half pound of suet and mix with it one-half pound each of bread crumbs and chopped apples. Sweeten with six ounces of granulated sugar and add the grated rind of two lemons. Well butter a basin or mold, press in the mixture, cover with a piece of greased paper and steam for four hours. You will notice no moisture is used. It is best to let it stand a few minutes before turning it out. Serve with any nice sweet sauce.—Boston Globe.

Biscuits Renewed.

When biscuits are left over for a day or two, cut in slices and dip in a batter made of one egg, a pinch of salt and two heaping spoonfuls of flour to half a teaspoon of milk. Fry on hot greased griddles, turning as quickly as one side is nicely browned in order to keep the inside tender. Serve with butter and sugar.—N. Y. Ledger.

In Illinois there are 10,500 miles of railroad, over which were carried last year 63,485,413 passengers, with the loss of only 12 lives.

HUMOROUS.

"My tailor has promised to have my clothes done to-morrow." "Do you think he'll give them to you on time?"

"Oh, no; I'll have to pay cash."—Yonkers Statesman.

"Not Half Bad.—Johnnie's Teacher

"And now, Johnnie, tell me what the last commandment is." Johnnie (a street car tourist)—"Please don't spit on the floor."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

—Visitor—"I am grieved to learn of your mistress's illness. Nothing serious—no great cause for alarm, I trust?"

The New French Maid—"No, monsieur, nozing beeg, nozing grande. Something—what you call leetle, petite. What zey call ze leetle—small—small-pox."—Tit-Bits.

"Old Shilark says he is the man who started you on the road to fortune."

"The old villain tells the truth. All I had when I was a young man was a 50-acre farm and he cheated me out of that. Then I had to come to town to get something to do and got into business and got rich."—Indianapolis Journal.

—A Patron of the Divore Courts.—

"Did I understand you to say that you are unmarried, madam?" asked the lawyer who was cross-examining a Chicago woman. "I do not know what you understood me to say," replied the witness; "but that is what I said. I have been unmarried four times."—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

—Young Writer (to editor of Monthly Review)—"If you think my article so good, why don't you let me put my name to it?" Editor—"Because nobody would read it if I did." Young Writer—"But you had an article by the duke of Ditchwater in your last number, and you put his name to it." Editor—"Exactly; but nobody would have read it if I hadn't."—Pick-Me-Up.

—An English lady, on a visit to Scotland, attended public worship in a parish church at no great distance from Crathie. In the same pew were about a dozen persons—farmers, their wives, and herdsman. Shortly before the beginning of the sermon, a large snuff mill was passed to the occupants of the pew. Upon the lady visitor declining to take a pinch, an old man, who was evidently a shepherd, whispered, in a very significant manner: "Tak' the sneeshin', mem; tak' the sneeshin'. Ye dinna ken our meenister; ye'll need it afore he's done!"—Tit-Bits.

UP IN A BALLOON.

Sensations Produced by Its Rising and Falling.

A dim sunlight strikes us in the balloon. Suddenly we realize we are in bright sunshine again, with fleecy white clouds below us and a deep blue sky above. Look at the shadow of the balloon on the clouds! See the light prismatic colors like a halo around the shadow of the car. Here we are all alone, in perfect silence, in the depths of a great abyss—massive clouds towering up on all sides, a snowy white mass below. But no sign of earth—no sign of anything human. Not a sound, not a sign of life! What peace! What bliss! Horrors! What's that report? The balloon must have burst. Oh, nonsense! Keep still! It's only a fold of the stuff nipped by the netting being suddenly released; that's all.

Well, we are falling, for see the bits of paper apparently ascending. And we must take care, for the coldness and dampness of this cloud will cause the gas to contract and we shall fall rapidly. So get a bag of ballast ready, for we are already in the darkness of the cloud. Now the gas bag shrinks and writhes, and the loose folds rustle together, and it gets darker. You can feel the breeze blowing upward against your face or hand held over the edge of the car. Well, that's not to be wondered at, for remember we are falling, say 1,000 feet a minute, which is the same thing as if we were going along ten miles an hour sitting in a dogcart. Not quite the same, you say—you'd sooner be in the car? Well, perhaps if the horse were going straight at a wall, without the possibility of being able to stop him, you would think otherwise. But look! There is the earth again; so out with your ballast. Go on! Pour out plenty; there's no good economizing.—Blackwood's Magazine.

To Attain Beauty.

The plain and thoughtful maiden was troubled.

"What is the best way to attain beauty?" she asked.

"Oh, that's easy," returned the pretty and vivacious maiden.

"Then tell me," urged the plain and thoughtful maiden eagerly.

"Well, of course, there are lots of people who will claim that they can make you beautiful."

"Yes."

"And very likely some of them can help you some."

"Yes."

"But that's not the surest and most satisfactory way."

"Of course not."

"No, indeed. The surest way is to be born beautiful."

The fact that they never speak now is very generally known in the neighborhood in which they live.—Chicago Post.

Great Deal Cheaper.

She—What would this world be without love?

He (remembering the opera and the supper of the night before)—It would be a blamed sight cheaper, for one thing.—Cleveland Leader.

Woman's Finance.

Mr. Bacon—"You didn't need two more dresses, my dear."

Mrs. Bacon—"But they were so cheap I thought they would pay the expenses of my trip to the city, you know.—Up-to-Date."

Keeping It Secret.

Maude—Miriam is trying to keep her engagement a secret.

Martha—How do you know?

"She told me so."—Yonkers Statesman.

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